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The Plea of Love

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THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
(CLASS OF 1882)
OF NEW YORK

1918

THE PLEA OF LOVE

A COMEDY IN VERSE
BY
OSBORN RENNIE LAMB



FOUNDED UPON AND SUGGESTED BY THE LIFE OF
CATULLUS, THE GREAT LATIN POET, WHOSE BEST
LYRICS GRACE THIS WORK AND ADD A LUSTER TO IT

PUBLISHED BY
THE AMES & ROLLINSON PRESS
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1918

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To
Geo. Thos. Pease
with the kind regards of
Osborn Pease
New York - Dec 9, 1907.

INTRODUCTION.

ITTLE is known of Caius Valerius Catullus the Latin poet who is the central figure of this play, except that he was born of a respectable family in the year 87 B. C., and lived in or near Verona, from which city he removed at an early age to Rome, where his genius and accomplishments quickly won him recognition. There he lived on terms of intimacy with some of the most distinguished literary and political characters of the day. We are assured that he was known to Cicero and Julius Caesar, and that he was the personal friend of Caius Memmius, then Praetor of the Province of Bithynia. The Lesbia of his poems is supposed to have been the daughter or wife of a well-known Roman; whether she was Clodia or another is immaterial, the world is grateful to her for having inspired such beautiful lyrics as were dedicated to her by her lover.

The poems of Catullus justly rank with the best lyrical poetry of the period, and it is doubtful if certain of his lyrics have ever been surpassed. Be that as it may, the sincerity, grace and beauty of these poems, have tempted us to write around the vague life of the author a play introducing the best of his lyrics, and "The Plea of Love," a comedy, in one act is the result. The scene of this play is laid in the summer villa of Catullus, known to have been located upon a peninsular called Sirmio—a promontory that projects into the Benacus, now known as Lago de Garda, Italy. Here vestiges of the villa may yet be seen, and here it was that Napoleon I, who never failed to recognize the genius of a true artist, drank this toast—"To the most elegant of Latin poets."

Catullus lived amid the turmoil and dissipation of Rome and it is therefore not surprising to learn that he became dissipated and died at an early age about the year 48 B. C.

That he ever descended to the depravity of the "viveurs" of his day is seriously to be doubted, for all art is but a form of expression, and poetry above all other arts is the most subjective, "we give of ourselves when we sing our lay." It is therefore natural to conclude that the poet who wrote Sweet Sirmio, Lesbias Sparrow or the famous Hymenael dedicated to Julia & Manlius, could not have been a depraved man. He may have been weak, but that is a fault we can excuse though not admire. We have therefore pictured Catullus in this play as we see him through his poems, rather than from the vague history by which he is known to the world.

The play, although of one act, is unique in form, and falls into the logical subdivisions that make a complete action, viz.: a beginning, a middle, and an end. The curtains for these subdivisions have been indicated, but it could be given with equal success if presented without a curtain, as the ancient classical dramas were performed. The plot of "The Plea of Love," is very simple and is devoid of those theatrical tricks that are the sure sign of the common place. The action is well sustained and self-progressive, the climax of the play being carried well toward the end where the resolution of the plot is concluded amid a scene of rare beauty. This play is an earnest attempt, to produce not a musical comedy, but a drama with music logically introduced. Recourse has therefore been made to verse in the dialogue, to vocal and incidental music throughout the action, and such scenic display as will enrich the whole and produce that magical appeal, that awakens the imagination and exalts the soul: The appeal of Beauty.

THE CHARACTERS

MEN.

CATULLUS, A poet and friend of all true lovers.

CAIUS MEMMIUS, Praetor of the Province of Bithynia.

LUCRETIUS, A friend of Catullus, and a Roman.

JULIAN, Son of Caius Memmius.

PHILTO, Slave of Caius Memmius.

GRIPUS, Slave of Lucretius.

MINSTRAL, An old protégé of Catullus.

DAVUS,

ALCAEUS, } Chorus of Youths.

PALAEASTRA, } Slaves of Catullus.

MYRSON,

EROS, or Cupid, the god of love.

WOMEN.

EUNOMIA, Wife of Lucretius and Mother of Hermia.

HERMIA, Daughter of Lucretius.

PHAEDRIA,

THESSALA, } Chorus of Maidens.

QUINTIA,

CELIA, } Slaves of Catullus.

EUPHROSYNE,

AGLAIA,

THALIA,

} The Three Graces.

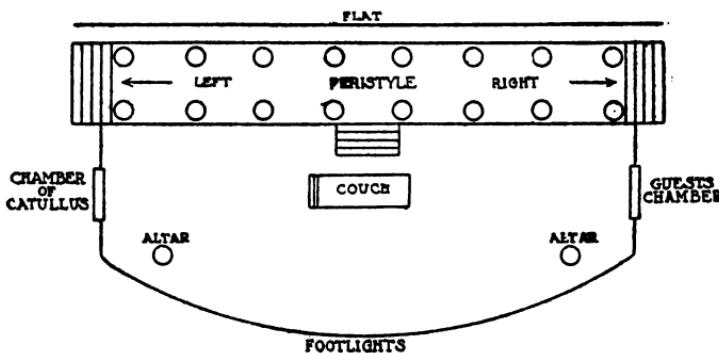
Chorus of Husbandmen, Servants, &c.

THE SCENE.

The scene of this play is laid in the summer villa of Catullus, located upon a promontory called Sirmio in the Benacus, now known as the Lago de Garda Italy.

A magnificent Grecian peristyle crosses the entire width of the stage, three steps lead up to this portico beyond which may be seen the lake and the Alps in the distance. The fore stage is the main hall of the palace and has a ceiling effect showing it as such.

A couch occupies the center stage. On the right and left are bronze tripods or altars. See plan.



THE TIME.

It is early morn of the Spring of the year of 57 B. C.
As the curtain ascends, the faint glimmer of the morning
star is seen on the horizon.

DISCOVERED.

Catullus is discovered reclining upon a couch placed in center stage; back of him is the peristyle, and beyond the blue waters of the Benacus. In the distance may be seen the snow-capped peaks of the Alps. Catullus is a handsome man six feet or more in height, but his gray hair and weary eyes denote one given to dissipation.

About him seated upon the floor in graceful attitudes, are four young maids, his slaves, Phaedria, Thessala, Quintia and Celia; they have their lutes and lyres, and wear chaplets of laurel and roses upon their heads. As the curtain ascends, they sing to Catullus and accompany themselves upon their lutes.

PRELUDE.

By the orchestra precedes curtain.

"THE PLEA OF LOVE."

The Lyrics.

No. 1. Prelude preceding curtain by Orchestra.

- " 2. "Now spring renews her gentle charms"—Catullus. Translation of W. Peter, sung by Chorus of Maidens.
- " 3. "No nymph among the much loved few"—Catullus. Translation of Hon. G. Lamb. Solo by Quintia.
- " 4. Chorus of Husbandmen (off scene)—O. R. Lamb.
- " 5. "Sweet Sirmio, Sweet Sirmio."—Catullus. Translation of Thomas Moore, solo by Minstral.
- " 6. "Mourn all ye Loves and Graces Mourn—Catullus. Translation of Hon. G. Lamb, solo by Minstral.
- " 7. Hermia's plea to Catullus adapted from—Agathias. Translation of J. H. Mirivale, solo by Hermia.
- " 8. Hymn to Love, Duo Hermia and Julian—O. R. Lamb.
- " 9. The Plea of Love, Duo Hermia and Julian—O. R. Lamb.
- " 10. The Rondelay of the Graces, Trid—O. R. Lamb.
- " 11. "The Spring hath come," adapted from the Greek —O. R. Lamb.
- " 12. The Epithalamium—Catullus.—Translation of Sir C. A. Elton, sung by full Chorus.
- " 13. The Wedding March, by Orchestra.
- " 14. The Chorus of Husbandmen (off scene)—O. R. Lamb.
- " 15. Concluding Chorus, The Plea of Love (off scene) —O. R. Lamb.

SCENE I.
MUSICAL No. 2.
"SPRING SONG."

Sung by the Chorus of Maidens, at the conclusion of
the Prelude—as the curtain ascends.

I.

Now Spring renews her gentle charms,
And lulled in zephyr's balmy arms,
Soft grows the angry sky;
Haste then, and leaving Phrygia's plains,
Essaying Nicae's rich domains,
To Asia's Cities fly.

II.

My soul all trembling, pants to stay,
My bounding feet the call obey;
Friends of my youth farewell.
Loved friends, with whom I left my home,
Now doomed through various ways to roam,
In different lands to dwell.

III.

The Spring renews her gentle charms,
And lulled in zephyr's balmy arms,
Soft grows the angry sky.
My soul all trembling pants to stray,
My bounding feet the call obey,
To Asia's cities fly.

CATULLUS.

(Distractedly.) The measure is too sad, sweet maids.
essay a merrier air Sing ye of love.

QUINTIA.

My lord, you die of love already; why add unto your
sorrow?

CATULLUS.

Pass me a cup of wine, good Quintia. The fleeting memories of happy days instil not only grief, but mix there with a discontent that rends my heart in twain. Oh, had my Lesbia lived, how happy would our lot have been; but now, alas; (He drinks the wine).

QUINTIA.

My lord, I beg thee let these memories pass. For nights thou hast not closed thine eyes, and sleep evades thee, as the Echo mocks us when we sing.

CATULLUS.

Could I but conquer this hell of discontent—this fire of love that now consumes my heart, then might I rest in peace. Another cup of wine, good Quintia.

QUINTIA.

Nay, my lord, refrain I prithee; the wine but makes thy humor worse.—Good master, we thy hand-maids love thee much and faithfully our vigil keep, but now the night is gone and weariness o'er takes us quite. Repose thine head, and I will bathe thy brow with this perfume.

CATULLUS.

What is the hour, Quintia?

QUINTIA.

The moon hath set. The Pleiadese fade in the distant sky, and Phospor now the early dawn proclaims.

CATULLUS.

How long the night! (looking at the heavens) Brave Orion in his glory wanes, the day will soon be breaking! Essay, another measure, child—sing thou of love, my love, my Lesbia.

QUINTIA.

I will, my lord.

CATULLUS.

And then as she was wont to do, bathe thou my brow
with sweet perfume. Perchance the gods may hear thy
plea and send sweet sleep to solace me.

No. 3.

QUINTIA SINGS OF LESBIA.

No nymphs among the much loved few,
Is loved as thou art loved by me;
No love was e'er so fond, so true,
As my fond love, sweet maid, for thee.

II.

Yes, e'en thy faults, bewitching dear!
With such delights my soul possess;
That whether faithless, or sincere,
I cannot love thee more, nor less!

III.

No nymph, among the much loved few,
Is loved as thou art loved by me;
No love was e're so kind, so true,
As my fond love, sweet maid for thee.

CATULLUS.

(Half dreaming, half awake). How sweet, how sweet,
Oft have I sung that song.
My child sing it again I pray,
And with thy strain, allay my pain,
And drive my cares away.

{ Quintia repeats the song, and as she concludes
Catullus falls into a gentle sleep. As he sleeps the
Minstrals cease their song and there is heard the
Husbandmen singing in the distance. }

No. 4.

CHORUS OF HUSBANDMEN, ETC.

(Off Scene.)

PART I.

Tenors and Basses.

The night is gone, the day is come,
Ho sluggards be awaking,
Come join our throng, with festal song,
For lo! the dawn is breaking.
Ho to the fields, whose treasure yields,
Your food and lowly portion,
Then let's away, before the day,
And seek the laborer's fortune.

PART II.

Sopranos and Altos.

Faithful little mothers,
Patient little wives,
We seek our toil, amid the soil,
The honey and the hives.
Our task is just beginning,
And as we join the throng,
We greet the day with rondelay,
And sing our merry song.

PART III.

Ho, ho, away we go,
Hither away, thither away,
So, so, merrily go
Singing our rondelay.

PART IV.

Tenors and Basses.

Then plant the seed, and kill the weed,
For Nature's most compelling,
She'll bring the rain, and ripe the grain,
With the harvest rich excelling.

Then to your toil, ye sons of soil,
And happy be your portion,
For we're away, before the day,
To seek the laborer's fortune.

PART V.

Sopranos, Tenors, Altos, Basses.

Ho, ho, away we go,
Hither away, thither away,
So, so, merrily go,
Singing our rondelay.

At the conclusion of the chorus of husbandmen Catullus awakes. The dawn is breaking, the stars grow dim, the sun at last breaks through the mist and shines upon the lake; the birds add their chorus of joy, and where before all was dark and dreary, the scene becomes joyful and resplendent. The minstrels now arouse themselves, arise and pass behind the couch of Catullus, who entranced at the beauty of the scene and refreshed by the few moments of repose, arises and stands spell bound, admiring the scene. The beautiful music which has accompanied this scenic display now ceases momentarily and Catullus speaks.

CATULLUS.

How fair the morn, how joyfully the birds their madrigals proclaim! How sweet the perfume of the thyme, as on the balmy air its odor, gently wafts to me. How fair! How fair! All nature seems to smile, and I at last in sweet content her beauties may survey.

QUINTIA.

My lord, thy sleep hath much refreshed thee. Then wilt thou not from out thy store of happiness repay thy faithful slaves, who through the weary night have watched

o'er thee and given solace in thy discontent. A boon we
beg of thee, a boon my lord.

ALL.

Aye! aye! a boon.

CATULLUS.

What would ye that I grant?

QUINTIA.

I tremble least I ask, that which in truth may vex thee
sore.

CATULLUS.

Am I not rich and generous? Come, speak my child.

QUINTIA.

Aye, rich thou art, yet art thou poorer than the meanest
slave.

CATULLUS.

Speak not in riddles thus, how am I poorer than the
meanest slave?

QUINTIA.

Once thou wert loved, now thou art sad and lonely. Thy
Lesbia dead, thou seekest in the cup to drown thy grief.
Beware the wine though it be red for they who seek
their solace in the grape to Circe's spell succumb.

CATULLUS.

(Seriously.) Thou speakest truth my child,—yet grief
and discontent rend me in twain and if I drown my sor-
row thus, it is because my love is great. They know not
grief who in their souls have not a great capacity for love
—(pause). And yet thou speakest truth, for Circe's spell
is death.

QUINTIA.

Then forswear the cup my lord, and grant thy gentle
hand-maid's boon.

ALL.

Aye, good master, forswear, forswear.

CATULLUS.

Now by the Kingdom of the Powers above, by Jove and
all the gods on high, I swear that I shall mend my evil
ways, and be the man that ye would have me be.

QUINTIA.

O, good my lord.

CATULLUS.

And though I ne'er may Lesbia's equal
View, nor hope for love such as she
Gave me from her bounteous store.
Yet by Minerva and the gods I swear,
To be the friend of lovers evermore.
For love alone this wondrous world doeth move
And life is death, without the touch of love.
But with the coming of its gentle sway,
Our sorrows vanish, darkness turns to day;
Then to all lovers shall I freely give
My wealth, my aid, that they may love and live.

QUINTIA.

O, good, O, gentle master, now dost thou fill our hearts
with joy and make us glad indeed. Behold thy hand-maids
kneeling at thy feet in silence do bespeak their gratitude.

CATULLUS.

Such fēalty as this would touch a heart less tender than
mine own, and I were most unworthy of it, if e'er my oath
I should disclaim. Arise my children and let your weary
eyes seek some repose. And then before the fleeting day
is gone, come hither all, and vent your joy in song.

Exeunt Quintia, Thessala, Celia, Phaedria, via cham-
ber (right).

Curtain

SCENE II.

Enter Davus (a youth).

DAVUS.

My lord, a messenger from the Province of Bithynia
awaits without.

CATULLUS.

What manner of man is he?

DAVUS.

An old man gray with years, yet rugged and of gentle
countenance.

CATULLUS.

'Tis Philto—bring him hither at once.

Enter Philto and Davus.

{ Philto is an aged man, He bears a jar of wine which
he lays upon the ground, this done, he bows to
Catullus.

CATULLUS.

Welcome good Philto, give me thine hand, and say that
Caius Memmius my friend is well.

PHILTO.

He is my lord and hither comes upon his way to Rome,
where some affairs of state do take his care. This wine
he sends and bids ye all be merry.

CATULLUS.

Thanks good Philto, how fares his son. He was a hand-
some boy when last I saw him.

PHILTO.

Young Julian hath my master sent to Rome with news
of much import from Caesar.

CATULLUS.

I would the boy were here for I do love him much.
Order the feast prepared good Davus, for Memmius hath
a retinue that will affray our cook more than a Roman
Legion. Go thou good Philto and essay our wine.

Exeunt Philto and Davus left.

SCENE III.

Enter Myrson (a youth).
MYRSON.

A messenger from Rome awaits without my lord. He says he is the slave of thine old friend, Lucretius.

CATULLUS.

"Tis well, then bid him enter.

(Enter Myrson and Gripus.)

CATULLUS.

Welcome, good Gripus. How flourishes the Capitol since I have hid me in this sweet retreat.

GRIPUS.

All goes well, my lord since Caesar steers the ship of state, but in the household of my master, events run not so smoothly in their course.

CATULLUS.

What's gone amiss, speak boy, speak.

GRIPUS.

Thou knowest well, O, Catullus, how happily is my master wed, how rich he hath become, and how his only daughter Hermia, now sixteen summers past, is sought in marriage by the young gallants of Rome.

CATULLUS.

All this I know nor could I wish for fortune less, were I a maid.

GRIPUS.

Not so, my lord, Hermia will favor none save with disdain. Her mother pleads that she is much too young to wed, and sighs and tears now rend our home where once such happiness prevailed.

CATULLUS.

Hath Hermia no lover?

GRIPUS.

I know of none—i' faith—she vows that she will never wed, no matter whom the man may be.

CATULLUS.

A sure proof of her inconstancy—What says Lucretius to this?

GRIPUS.

He's sore perplexed, my lord, and comes to seek thy counsel.

CATULLUS.

Comes Hermia and her lady mother with Lucretius?

GRIPUS.

Aye my lord—they journey leisurely from Rome and e're the day is gone will seek the shelter of thy roof.

CATULLUS.

Now hast thou brought me news indeed. Take this, good Gripus, and bid them welcome to fair Sirmio. (He hands Gripus a ring) and thou, Myrson, prepare the best within the palace for my friends.

Exeunt Myrson and Gripus right.

CATULLUS.

Ho, minstral, hither, accord thy lyre and sing a joyful lay. Sing thou of Sirmio, for fortune smiles on me today.

SCENE IV.

Enter Minstral.

(An old man with lyre; he sings.)

No. 5.

SWEET SIRMIO.

Sweet Sirmio, Sweet Sirmio,
Of all peninsulas and isles,
That in our lake of silver lie,
Enwreathed by Neptune's smiles.

II.

How gladly back to thee I fly,
Still doubting asking—Can it be,
That I have left Bithynia's sky,
And gaze in safety upon thee.

III.

Oh what is happier than to find,
Our hearts at ease, our perils past,
When anxious long the lengthening mind,
Lays down its load of care at last.

IV.

When tired with toil, o'er land and deep,
Again we tread the welcome floor
Of our sweet home, and sink to sleep
Upon the welcome bed once more.

V.

'Tis this, 'tis this, that pays alone,
The ills of all life's former track,
Shine out, my beautiful, mine own,
Sweet Sirmio, greet thy master back.

VI.

And thou fair lake whose waters quaff,
The light of heaven, like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, rejoice, let all that laugh
Abroad, at home, laugh out with me.

(Julian sings off scene.)

O, thou fair lake whose waters quaff,
The light of heaven, like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, my beautiful, mine own,
Sweet Sirmio greet me back to thee.

The minstral and Catullus both much surprised, turn
to see from whence the song comes, when Julian,
who has ascended from the Lake below, scales the
balcony of the peristyle singing as he bounds over.
"Sweet Sirmio greet me back to thee."

CATULLUS.

(Speaking to the minstral.) 'Tis Julian.

SCENE V.

Enter Julian.

{ A handsome youth scarcely twenty years of age. He runs to Catullus, who overjoyed at seeing him, enfolds him in his arms. The minstral seeing this exits silently. }

CATULLUS.

Here thou truant boy—into my arms (he embraces him), and say what brought thee hence, when thou should'st be in Rome.

JULIAN.

(Evasively). Give me thine hand again, good friend, and tell me of my father.

CATULLUS.

He's well, and ere the hour's spent will greet thee here himself.

JULIAN.

The gods be praised! Then am I come in time. (Imploredly) O, Catullus! lend me now thine aid or I am lost.

CATULLUS.

Nay, say rather thou art found.

JULIAN.

Jest not, good friend, for I am sore beset.

CATULLUS.

Then speak, my boy—say what misfortune hath befallen thee. Hath politics embroiled thee in some grave affair?

JULIAN.

Nay!

CATULLUS.

Art ill?—Art in debt?

JULIAN.

Nay!

CATULLUS.

(Knowingly) Art in love?

JULIAN.

(Sadly) Alas!

CATULLUS.

(Laughing) Ha, ha, ha! Why, one would think it were a dangerous malady to judge by thy sad countenance.

JULIAN.

Ah, taunt me not!

CATULLUS.

And is she fair? Come, now, I'll wager she is beautiful.

JULIAN.

(Passionately)

Aye, that she is beyond thy wildest fancy,
No nymph is there more litesome or more gay,
No flower sweeter or more delicate than she,
A queen is not more regal in her attitude
Nor is there music sweeter than her voice,
Which, when she speaks, discloses all
The beauties of a mind so filled with pure
And gentle thoughts, that I do marvel that
These attributes should grace a maiden
Of such tender years. (Pause.)

CATULLUS.

In truth, thou art in love. But is thy love requited?

JULIAN.

If eyes are but the windows of the soul,
Then have I read the depth of love
That dwells within her heart.

CATULLUS.

(Aside) He's solely hit? (Aloud) Who is the father of the maid, and what her name?

JULIAN.

She's called Hermia. Her father is a merchant prince of Rome, Lucretius by name, and friend to thee.

CATULLUS.

Now, by what trick of fortune, hath she blown thy ship athwart his course?

JULIAN.

Alas! I know not, unless it be the will of Fate.

CATULLUS.

E'en so?

JULIAN.

By chance I met sweet Hermia;
By chance we wooed unknown to all:
By fortune's guiding star I followed her,
Not knowing whence or why I came,
And now before the fleeting day is spent,
Fair Sirmio shall welcome her in sweet content.

CATULLUS.

But now I fear thy goddess Fortune parts thy company.

JULIAN.

(Imploringly) Ah, say not so, good friend; lend me thine aid and all may yet be well.

CATULLUS.

Thy father and Lucretius have been at enmity these many years. How can I calm a feud that has endured so long.

JULIAN.

(In despair) Alas! I know not nor can I comprehend the reason for this enmity. But this I know: If Hermia and I be not in love and honor wed. Then will the hope and aspiration of our lives be crushed for-e'er.

CATULLUS.

The case is grave—(pause)—But leave me now, and hide
thee in my chamber (pointing to right) there, perchance
I'll think upon some trim devise that shall resolve thy care.

JULIAN.

(With emotion) The 'gods give thee strength, good
friend. For we have no advocate save thee, and thou alone
canst prosper our design.

CATULLUS.

Be of good cheer—and now my boy, be gone,
Ho, minstral hither, and regale me with a song.

Exit Julian, Chamber right.

SCENE VI.

Enter Minstral.

{ The minstral sings the song herewith, whilst Catullus sits upon the couch trying to find a solution to the difficulty that confronts him. }

No. 6.

LESBIA'S SPARROW.

I.

Mourn, all ye Loves and Graces, mourn,
Ye wits, ye gallants, and ye gay,
Death from my fair, her bird hath torn,
Her much-loved sparrow snatched away.

II.

Her very eyes she prized not so,
For he was fond and knew my fair,
Well as young girls their mothers know,
And sought her breast and nestled there.

III.

Once fluttering round, from place to place,
He gaily chirp'd to her alone;
But now the gloomy path must trace,
Whence Fate permits returned to none.

IV.

Accursed Shades, o'er Hell that lower,
Oh, be my curses on your head,
Ye, that all pretty things devour,
Have torn from me, my pretty bird.

V.

Oh, evil deed, Oh, sparrow dead,
Oh, what a wretch if thou canst see,
My fair one's eyes with weeping red,
And know how much she grieves for thee.

VI.

Mourn all ye Loves and Graces! mourn,
Ye wits, ye gallants, and ye gay,
Death from my fair, her bird hath torn
Her much loved sparrow snatched away.

{ At the conclusion of the song, Myrson enters and announces the arrival of Lucretius and his family—the minstral hearing his message to Catullus withdraws. }
Exit Minstral right.

SCENE VII.

Enter Myrson, right.
MYRSON.

My Lord, thy friend Lucretius and his retinue have come.

CATULLUS.

"Tis well—I'll go to meet them. (He arises and is about to pass up the steps of the peristyle, when the group enter with much ado and come forward to meet him. During this episode the minstral exits left with Myrson.)

SCENE VIII.

Enter Lucretius, Eunomia and Hermia.

CATULLUS.

(Advances) Welcome, welcome to Sirmio.
Thine hand, Lucretius, and thine Eunomia,
And thou sweet Hermia, a kiss (he kisses her)
And now let hill and dale and mead proclaim,
A hearty welcome to ye all again.

LUCRETIUS.

(Warmly) Art ever kind good friend,
Yet are we come to test thy friendship sorely.

LUCRETIUS.

The times have sadly changed since you and I were young.
Now children dare to brave their parents and thwart their
cherished plans.

HERMIA.

(Sadly) Oh, father, say not so; I brave thee not,
I brave thee not. I do not wish to wed.

EUNOMIA.

She is too young.

LUCRETIUS.

Oh aye—take thou her part—But this remember, that
by our law we may in wedlock give our child to whomso-
e'er we will.

HERMIA.

There is no law for me, save that of love. If e'er I wed,
'twill be for love, for love I'll live and die.

LUCRETIUS.

Thou wayward child, I warn thee taunt me no more, but
ere the season of the full moon come, make thou a choice
that shall please both thy mother and myself.

HERMIA.

(Weeping) Alas! Alas!

EUNOMIA.

(To Lucretius) And lest thou too forget, remember this, that by the law and custom of our land the father pays the daughter's dower.

LUCRETIUS.

I know it well. Am I not rich?

EUNOMIA.

Aye! but not too generous! The young gallants who seek thy daughter's hand, think not of love, but of the dower she'll bring.

LUCRETIUS.

No man shall dictate terms to me.

EUNOMIA.

Art sure? (to Catullus) And now, good friend, give us thy counsel.

HERMIA.

(Weeping) I do not wish to wed.

CATULLUS.

Leave Hermia with me. I'll reason with her and bring her to thee presently.

Exeunt Lucretius and Eunomia right.

CATULLUS.

Come hither, child, give me thine hand, and dry away these bitter tears. (They sit upon the couch.) Thou dost not wish to wed?

HERMIA.

Nay! why should we maids be driven from our home and our parental gods. Alas, alas. My poor heart bleeds for sympathy.

CATULLUS.

(Aside) There's but one remedy for love, and that's more love. (Aloud) Dost thou believe in omens?

HERMIA.

(Surprised) I know not;

CATULLUS.

Then list to me! Last night as here I lay upon my couch, a dove flew o'er the lake to me, and round its neck it bore a ring of gold tied with a skein of silk. I cut the thread and let the bird go free. When lo—My eyes fell on the ring and there I saw deep graven in the band (He shows her the ring) Hermia and Julian.

HERMIA.

(Grasps the ring and arises in great excitement, repeating) Julian and Hermia. The ring is mine; my love, oh where is he? O, Catullus, good friend, Thou hast divined the secret of my heart. Speak—say is Julian here? Ah, taunt me not. No more shall I dissemble, but quickly, quickly, bid him fly to me upon the wings of love.

CATULLUS.

Patience, patience, my child.

HERMIA.

Nay! Nay!. Ah taunt me not—ah, taunt me not.

No. 7.

HERMIA'S PLEA TO CATULLUS.

(She recites to music)

I.

O, Catullus, O, Catullus,
What are your cares and joys,
To love that swells the longing virgin's breast,
A flame half hid in doubt,
Soon kindled, soon burnt out,
A blaze of momentary heat at best is yours.

II.

A privilege if your kind,
If haply you may find,
Some friend to share the secret of your heart,
Of if your inbred grief,
Admit of such relief,
The chase, the dance, the play assuage thy smart.

III.

Whilst we poor hapless maids,
Condemned to pine in Shades,
And to our dearest friends our thoughts deny,
Can only sit and weep,
Whilst others round us sleep,
Unpitied languish, and unheeded die.

CATULLUS.

Nay! Nay! Thou art not unpitied, Hermia, I am thy friend, and e'er shall be,
And as a token of my right intent,
Thy love shall greet thee e'er the hour is spent.

HERMIA.

Shall greet me here?

CATULLUS.

Aye, and gladly too,
And then ye may your plighted troth renew.

HERMIA.

O, Love, O, Happiness, forever our hearts enchain,
For I shall greet my lover once again.

(To Catullus whom she embraces)

And be thou e'er our counsellor and friend,
For unto thee our cares we must command,
Then praise to Jove and all the gods above,
That they may harken to our plea of love.

CATULLUS.

Now, my child, begone,
Fly unto thy mother's arms and say,
That fortune brings thee joy today.

Exit Hermia right.

SCENE IX.

Enter Caius Memmius.

{ As Hermia exits to right, voices are heard off scene left; the clacking of whips and exclamations. Whoa-la, etc. Above all this commotion the voice of Caius Memmius is heard. }

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Off scene) Make way—Make way. I'll seek him out myself.

{ Some servants enter hurriedly with baggage from left and are immediately followed by Caius Memmius, a rugged, red-faced soldier, about fifty years of age, stout and evidently intemperate. Catullus advances to the steps and greets his friend. }

CATULLUS.

Welcome, my dear old friend, welcome.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Advances and grasps his hand warmly.)

The gods be praised we meet at last! (Pause) and thou good Catullus, if in truth thou art my friend, in love and mercy, let me have a cup of wine—my throat's aparch.

CATULLUS.

(To servant) A tankard of that Cyprian wine, and quicky, too. (To Caius Memmius) Now shalt thou drown thy thirst in nectar worthy of the gods.

{ The servant returns with a tankard and two cups. Catullus takes the cloak of Caius Memmius, and throws it upon the couch. He offers him a seat, but Caius Memmius impatiently struts up and down giving orders to his slaves on the peristyle to carry his baggage, etc., off left. }

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(To Catullus) Quick, quick, fill me a bumper; no stint I say; fill to the brim, that I may wreath my mind in smiles.

CATULLUS.

(Hands him the cup and straightway fills the other cup. Caius Memmius hands the servant the empty one.) Another smile, good friend.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

'Tis good, Ah—Catullus, there's naught can warm the heart like wine—fill thou a cup.

CATULLUS.

Nay, good friend, I have foresworn.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Amazed) Thou hast foresworn the grape? Ha, ha, ha, what merry jest is this?

CATULLUS.

The truth.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Dumfounded) Then if the day of miracles has come, fill thou me quick a mantling bowl, that I may drown me in the liquor.

CATULLUS.

(Mockingly) Alas, alas! what will thine evil ways engender?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Engender? Engender? Wine engends love. Wine warms the heart, and makes the blood pulse quickly through the veins. Wine masters all disputes and binds us to our friends, wine drowns our sorrows, dulls our cares, and fills our hearts with joy—(pause)—there's naught like wine. Then fill me up another bowl that I may make libation to gods and weep for thee.

CATULLUS.

(Pours him out another cup) Alas! thou art no model for thy son.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Ha, ha, ha—nor thou for me—

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Julian shall wed when he's one and twenty. I'll then resign unto his wife those cares that now give me so much concern.

CATULLUS.

Thou art indeed most wise. Hast thou discovered yet a maid to be his wife?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Confidentially) Nay! for in this affair I come to seek thy counsel.

CATULLUS.

Ha, ha, ha! My counsel? (Surprised) How can I serve thee?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Although a Veronese, yet art thou more a Roman than myself, Thou canst with candor give me counsel, and I will ever be thy debtor.

CATULLUS.

Ha, ha, ha! The task is not an easy one. (Pause) She must be fair and rich?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Aye! and a patrician. Look thou to that, for though I am a rugged soldier, I carry my head as high as the greatest aristocrat in Rome, no matter what his wealth may be.

CATULLUS.

(Reflecting) Give me time to weigh this strange affair. perchance dame Fortune may favor thy design.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Well, here's to Fortune and to thee (he raises his cup), and may ye ne'er part company. I'll join thee here anon.

Exit Caius Memmius right.

SCENE X.

CATULLUS AND HERMIA.

Re-enter Hermia, left.

{ Catullus seats himself upon the couch after the exit of Caius Memmius, reflecting upon the droll situation, when his thoughts are diverted by the entrance of Hermia. }

HERMIA.

O, Catullus, good friend, hast thou forgot thy promise? (Imploringly.) Ah, take me to my lover,—Nay, quickly! quickly! or else disclose where he is hid, that I may fly to him.

CATULLUS.

(Motions to her to be silent when off scene, Julien is heard to sing.)

JULIAN.

Sings:

Oh, thou fair lake whose waters quaff
The light of heaven like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, my beautiful, my own,
Sweet Sirmio greet me back to thee.

{ During the singing Catullus arises and takes Hermia's hand and leads her to his chamber door right. }

Exit Hermia.

SCENE XI.
CATULLUS AND LUCRETIUS.

Re-enter Lucretius, left.

LUCRETIUS.

(Impatiently.) How, now, what said my haughty
Hermia to thy appeal.

CATULLUS.

The matter is arranged.

LUCRETIUS.

(Surprised.) What matter? How arranged? Speak
not in riddles. Will she wed or no?

CATULLUS.

Thy child will wed (pause) on one condition.

LUCRETIUS.

(Haughtily.) So, so, she braves me still.

CATULLUS.

Nay, she braves thee not, but she will select the bride-
groom.

LUCRETIUS.

(Wildly.) Ha, ha, ha, The hussey, first she will not
wed, no matter whom the man may be—and then to hide
her sly hypocrisy, she will dictate terms unto her father,
ha, ha, ha, ye gods that's too much.

CATULLUS.

Patience, patience, hear me out; I have complied with
thy desire, yet back of all I see the hand of Fate.

LUCRETIUS.

(Surprised.) The hand of Fate?

CATULLUS.

Thy daughter loves and fain would wed, a youth whom
I do know, and would commend to thy esteem.

LUCRETIUS.

(Vexed) Who is he?

CATULLUS.

The son of a Roman soldier who in the wars hath gained
renown and is beloved by Caesar.

LUCRETIUS.

(Impatiently) His name?

CATULLUS.

He's young and brave, and a patrician.

LUCRETIUS.

His name? and quickly, for if he's the paragon you claim
then hast thou well fulfilled thy part in this affair.

CATULLUS.

Bring hither Eunomia, thy wife, and to you both I shall
disclose his name. Then let us thank the gods.

Exit Lucretius, left.

SCENE XII.

Re-enter Caius Memmius.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(In his cups) Ha, ha, ha, hast thou resolved the riddle.
Say whom shall Julian wed? She must be fair,—she must
be rich. Ha, ha, ha,—come name the maid.

CATULLUS.

The matter is most difficult (inspirationally). Yet now
I think me of a maid who will in all respects fulfill thy
most exacting terms.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Bravo,—bravo. What's her name?

CATULLUS.

She's called Hermia. (Pause) But art thou sure that
she will please thy son?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Ha, ha, ha! Julian shall marry whom I select, be she as ugly as a Satyr. (He looks up and sees Lucretius and Eunomia approaching by the peristyle from right.) Now, by the Shades, who comes here?

CATULLUS.

That's my friend, Lucretius,—(surprised) dost thou know him?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Ha, ha, ha! Know I him? Aye, I know him well. He's a swindler and a cheat.

CATULLUS.

What is the cause of discontent between ye?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

An affair of long standing.

CATULLUS.

Aye! but of what?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Oh, an affair of three thousand Phillippeans.

CATULLUS.

Three thousand Phillippeans!! a princely sum! Hast thou no recourse on him for it?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

The evidence is lost, and now he flouts to my face. He is a scoundrel and a knave—

CATULLUS.

(Gleefully) Ha, ha, ha! I think I may secure the debt for thee.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Full well, I know that thou art clever—but he is craftier than thou. Nay, the sum is lost unless I find the evidence.

CATULLUS.

We'll see,—leave him to me (confidentially), and now in all that I propose, give thou thy full consent.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

My consent?

CATULLUS.

Aye, thy full consent; we'll conquer craft by craft.

SCENE XIII.

Re-enter Lucretius & Eunomia from peristyle, right.
Lucretius regards Caius Memmius with surprise and contempt; Caius Memmius regards him with pompous dignity and disdain; Catullus, center stage, observes them both with gleeful satisfaction, whilst Eunomia remains left, a silent witness of the scene.

LUCRETIUS.

(Impatiently to Catullus) What trick of fate has brought this swearing wine bibber hither?

CATULLUS.

He's come to seek my counsel upon matter of import.

LUCRETIUS.

(Suspiciously) So, so, he's prating still about that old affair—(warmly)—I'll never pay an abol of it.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(To Catullus) What said he?

CATULLUS.

(To Caius Memmius) He'll never pay an abol of it.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(To Catullus) Ha, ha, ha, I told thee that.

CATULLUS.

(To Caius Memmius) Patience, patience (he crosses to Lucretius). Nay! he comes to seek a wife for his son, and I, being friend to thee, have bethought me of thy daughter Hermia. The match would be a worthy one, for Julian is beloved by Caesar and sure to gain renown.

LUCRETIUS.

(Dumfounded) Would he consent? (looking at Caius Memmius.)

CATULLUS.

I doubt not, if thou art generous with thy daughter's dower.

LUCRETIUS.

(Reflecting) What sum would he propose. (To Eunomia) Come hither, wife; I need thy counsel.

CATULLUS.

I'll ask him (he crosses to Caius Memmius). Now back me stoutly in my demand. What is the sum he owes you?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Three thousand Phillippeans.

CATULLUS.

(Crossing to Lucretius) Three thousand Phillippeans!

LUCRETIUS.

(Dumfounded) (Aloud) . Three thousand—Phillippeans!!—Ha, ha, ha, the sum that he pretends I owe him—(Furiously) Enough—Enough!—I see the trick. He thinks to win by craft that which by law he cannot gain, ha, ha, ha! I'll none if it, no, by the gods!

EUNOMIA.

(Pleading) Softly, softly.

LUCRETIUS.

(Furiously) I'll none of it, I say—I'll none of it.

EUNOMIA.

Yet such a match would please me much, and might please Hermia.

LUCRETIUS.

I'll none of it, no, by the gods! (He crosses to Caius Memmius.) Where is this paragon of virtue called thy son?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Surprised) In Rome, but what in that to thee?

LUCRETIUS.

Thinkest thou that he is worth three thousand Phillippeans? Ha, ha, ha, three thousand Phillippeans.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

He's drunk

CATULLUS.

Nay! for he's a water drinker. But listen!—(The voices of Julian and Hermia are heard off scene singing.)

JULIAN AND HERMIA SING.

O, thou fair lake where waters quaff,
The light of heaven like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice my beautiful, my own,
Sweet Sirmio, greet me back to thee.

{ As they sing, they cross the peristyle from right to left, their arms about each other's necks in perfect content, oblivious of the presence of their parents. All turn and regard the lovers in amazement. Catullus points to them as the music dies away. }

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Exclaims) Julian!!

LUCRETIUS AND EUNOMIA.

(Exclaim) Hermia!!

LUCRETIUS.

Can I believe mine eyes? Yet there she walks in love's embrace and flouts me spite of all. (Crossing to Caius Memmius.) Was that thy son?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Perplexed) It was.

LUCRETIUS.

I thought he was in Rome. How comes it then that here I find him with my daughter in his arms?

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Dumfounded) I know not.

LUCRETIUS.

(Tauntingly) Oh, ha, ha, ha, he does know, ha, ha, ha,— Avaunt, thou rogue, I see the trick,—my daughter for thy son; three thousand Phillippeans for thee. Then might thou mock me to my face, and bid the world be merry. I'll none of it, no, by the gods, I'll none of it.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Thou fool, thou dolt, thou knave, thou babbling water drinker, thou. No kith or kin of thine are equal to my family.

LUCRETIUS.

Oh, ha, ha, ha, and now he flaunts his family in my face. Enough, I say.

CATULLUS.

(Interrupting both) Aye, enough! Now list to me. This morn he came to me and begged me for my counsel. (To Caius Memmius) I have found thee a worthy wife for thy son. (To Lucretius) And thou a worthy husband for thy daughter. If now ye do not both consent and sanctify this union, then may the gods in wrath and anger punish ye. (Seriously) Have a care, for there is a power

greater than man, aye, greater than the gods themselves. The power of Fate,—and whatsoe'er is planned by Fate no man may ever hinder.

LUCRETIUS.

I'll not consent!

(Exit Lucretius, left.)

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Nor I!

(Exit Caius Memmius, right.)

CATULLUS.

Then may ye both be punished by the gods, for as I live, I'll plead with ye no more. Come hither Eunomia, Thou hast a gentle heart; essay to calm thy husband's wrath.

EUNOMIA.

I'll add my plea to thine, good friend, for well I know that wherever love holds sway the will of man is impotent.

CATULLUS.

Thou art a noble soul, Eunomia. Be firm, be brave, and fortune favor thee, for if these children be not in love and honor wed, their hearts will break, and sighs and tears will rend our home, where joy should hold full sway. Farewell!!

(Exit Eunomia, left.)

{ Catullus seats himself despondently upon the couch, when suddenly Julian and Hermia run to him and fall upon their knees before him, imploring his blessing. }

SCENE XIV.

Re-enter Julian and Hermia from chamber, right.

JULIAN.

Thy blessing, Catullus.

HERMIA.

Thy blessing, gentle friend, and say the gods have favored our design.

(Catullus arises, places his hand gently upon the head of each and bids them rise.)

CATULLUS.

Alas! my chlidren, my plea has been in vain, but there is still a greater power on high, that guides our lives and destinies. Then join with me, and in a glad refrain, we'll chant a hymn of praise, to Jove and all the gods above, and pray that they may hear our Plea of Love.

JULIAN AND HERMIA.

Sing

No. 8.

HYMN TO JOVE.

O, great and glorious Jove,
Who from thy throne above,
In majesty this wondrous world doth sway,
Hear thou our plaintive plea,
Made in sincerity,
And bid thy servants seek thy righteous way.

Two lovers haply met,
Who now are sore beset,
In pity seek thy all abiding care,
Our fathers torn with rage,
No reason can assuage,
Deny our wish and drive us to despair.

Then great and gracious Jove,
Hear thou our plea of love,
And bid our parents give their free consent,
Then shall we sing thy praise,
Who guidest all our ways,
And love shall guide our lives in sweet content.

At the conclusion of the chanting of the hymn to Jove, Catullus, who has remained standing, passes behind the couch, upon which Julian and Hermia have seated themselves, and in a low voice filled with emotion, recites the Incantation to Love here-with. The lovers are oblivious of his presence and much too content to heed his words or comprehend their meaning.

CATULLUS.

(Speaking to soft music.)

O, gentle Eros, god of Love,
Whose power is sent thee from above,
Come hither now and cast thou magic spell.

The day is gone, the night has come,
And here I leave them all alone,
Come hither thou and all their cares dispell.

Cast over them a mystic sleep,
Yet o'er them both a vigil keep,
And wreath about them garlands fair as May.

Then hither bring the Graces three,
Thyself and all fair company,
And wake them with a merry rondelay.

Ho! Eros, hither!!

(Exit Catullus.)

SCENE XV.

Enter Eros, and later

—The Three Graces.—

Enter Eros.

Eros is a pretty child about fourteen years of age, dressed as Cupid, bearing in his hand a bow and arrow, and on his back a quiver of darts; he runs noiselessly up behind the lovers and touches them with one of his darts. The touch of Cupid inspires them and they arise and sing the Love Duo here-with. Eros exits silently during the song, but returns again as it concludes.

No. 9.

LOVE DUO—JULIAN AND HERMIA.
“Tis Love That Conquers All the World.”

HERMIA.

Recit. Behold the moon upon the lake its
silver radiance shedding,

JULIAN.

Recit. And lo! the evening star ascends,
its trembling light dispelling,

HERMIA.

Recit. Propitious omens these,

JULIAN.

Recit. Bright omens for a wedding.

JULIAN.

Sings. O, Even Star, O, star of love,
Shed on us thy tranquil ray,
Queen of all the stars above,
Be our beacon till the day,

Weary wanderers are we all,
Lost in loves enticing wiles,
None resist thy ardent call,
None withstand thy gracious smiles.

HERMIA.

Sings. O, glorious moon, O, beauteous night,
List thou to our fervent plea,
Mother of all glories bright,
Guide us in sincerity.

Goddess of the realms on high,
Bid us drink of love's full store,
And we'll sing thy praise alway,
We shall bless thee evermore.

REFRAIN.

Duo.

'Tis love that conquers all the world,
To all mankind appealing,
His gentle sway, we feel alway,
As softly it comes stealing,
None can foretell, whence comes this spell,
Which naught but death can sever,
This joy divine, that doth entwine,
Our hearts and lives forever.

As the Love Duo concludes, Eros reappears silently behind the lovers and casts his mystic spell over them; they appear to be overcome by sleep. Julian falls upon the couch and reclines his head upon his arm, holding Hermia's hand. Hermia falls at his feet and reclines her head upon his knee in a graceful attitude. They fall asleep and remain thus until awakened by Eros and the Graces. The music which has accompanied this scene, now bursts into a symphonic dream motive, which is supposed to portray the beautiful thoughts of their dream. During the performance of this important number, Eros runs to right and left, and touches the flambeaus with his dart; they light immediately, and cast a weird glare upon the scene. At his command the Graces, three pretty children, bring garlands of flowers and wreath them about the lovers—festoons of ivy and bay deck the peristyle as if by magic—flowers descend from above at the call of Eros, who, now elated at his success runs hither and thither, crying—Hi-up, Hi-up, touching a flower here and another there with his magic dart, until the whole scene is aglow with luminous flowers. The new moon has ascended on the horizon and casts its radiance on the lake, and as the symphony concludes, the three Graces group themselves about the lovers. Then Eros withdraws to right and regards the scene with satisfaction; at this instant a powerful light illuminates the lovers and the Graces, and the divided curtains descend until the symphony is concluded.

When the curtains are raised a moment later, Eros and the Graces have disappeared and the lovers are discovered alone, covered with flowers, but still asleep. The flambeaus and magic flowers have been extinguished and the scene remains as Eros and the Graces left it. Decorated for the lovers' wedding.

SCENE XVI.

Re-enter Caius Memmius, right; Lucretius and Eunomia, left.

LUCRETIUS.

(To Eunomia) What miracle is this! These garlands of ivy and bay! These flowers! all! some festal scene portend.

EUNOMIA.

(Impatiently) Lead me to my child—My Hermia, oh, where is she (calling), Hermia, Hermia!

As she descends the steps of peristyle, she observes Julian and Hermia lying covered with flowers. She gives a cry of joy and runs to them, takes Hermia's hand and covers it with kisses. She then attempts to awaken her, but Hermia falls back lifelessly.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Attempts to bestir Julian, but he also falls back apparently lifeless.) Alas! alas! what evil deed is this! They're dead!

EUNOMIA.

Aye; they're dead (she falls upon her child weeping). Oh, my Hermia, my Hermia! (Now arises and stands between Caius Memmius and Lucretius, and in a furious rage denounces them both.) Oh, evil day, Oh, evil deed, behold to what your enmity hath brought us. (Pause) Now may the gods in anger smite ye both, for as there's justice in high heaven, ye'll rue this day,—ye'll rue this day. (She rushes out left.)

(Exit Eunomia)

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Approaches Lucretius; they regard the children sorrowfully.

LUCRETIUS.

(To Caius Memmius) Give me thine hand, the fault was mine.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

Nay, 'twas mine. Let bye gones pass, for in this all there is the hand of Fate.

LUCRETIUS.

(Pitifully) Ah, if my child were now alive, how gladly would I grant thy just demand.

CAIUS MEMMIUS.

(Kindly) Come Lucretius, our sorrows make us friends.

(Exeunt Caius Memmius and Lucretius, left.)

SCENE XVII.

Re-enter Catullus from his chamber, right, later Eros from left.

CATULLUS.

Ho, Eros hither, remove thy mystic spell.

Re-enter Eros and the Graces

— Music —

(They circle about the lovers mystically.)

EROS.

Recit. Awake! Awake! the dawn of love is breaking.

THE GRACES.

Recit. Rejoice with us our happiness partaking.

(They all sing this fairy rondelay.)

No. 10.
THE RONDELAY OF THE GRACES.

PART I.

Sing we merrily,
Chant we cherrily,
Life is fleeting as the day,
Dance we daintily,
Prance we playfully,
Happy, happy we alway.

PART II.

Spring hath come again,
Love shall never wane,
Join our merry, mystic throng,
Omens bright foretell,
Sorrows all dispel,
Sing with us our merry song.

PART III.

Sing we merrily,
Chant we cherrily,
Life is fleeting as the day,
Dance we daintily,
Prance we playfully,
Happy, happy, we alway.

(Exeunt Eros and the Graces, chamber, right.)

{ Eros and the Graces having disappeared, the lovers
awake, arouse themselves and look about in amaze-
ment. Then perceiving Catullus they give a cry of
joy and run to him. }

CATULLUS.

(He puts his right arm around Hermia and his left
about Julian and comes down the stage.) At last ye
awake, and not too soon, for lo, the festal day hath come,
ye are betrothed and e're the evening star hath set, shall
be in honor wed.

HERMIA.

O, Catullus, O, gentle friend, our trembling lips can ne'er bespeak our gratitude.

CATULLUS.

(Interrupting) Make haste, fly unto they mother and say that Catullus prepares the wedding feast. (To Julian) and thou unto thy father straightway proclaim the joyful news.

(Exeunt Hermia and Julian.)

CATULLUS.

Ho, Davus, prepare the marriage feast—the guests will soon be here, then may they say that Sirmio greets them joyfully today.

(Exit Catullus, left, to his chamber.)

SCENE XVIII.

{ As Catullus passes into his chamber, servants come from right and left, via peristyle, and remove the couch and set two long tables upon the peristyle. These they decorate with fruit and flowers. While this is taking place, the minstral enters and sings. }

No. II.

THE LAY OF THE MINSTRAL.

PART I.

The Spring hath come, the Spring hath come,
Oh, welcome happy day,
We greet thy reign, with sweet refrain,
And welcome thee alway,
To thee all nature's bountiful,
To thee the wood nymphs sing,
For here is naught more beautiful
Than bright and lithesome spring?

PART II.

Behold the dainty violet,
Steals out the sun to greet,
And lo! among his longed for showers,
Narcissus smiles so sweet,
'Tis now the lilies upland born,
Frequent the slopes of green,
And there the flower that lovers love,
The rose of all the queen.

Without an equal anywhere,
In full blown beauty glows,
For well we know that everywhere,
Persuasion's flower's the rose.
Then sing ye hills and meadows all,
And let your laughter ring,
And we shall seek thy flowery haunts,
And greet thee gentle Spring.

PART III.

The Spring hath come, the Spring hath come,
Oh welcome, happy day,
We greet thy reign, with sweet refrain,
And welcome thee alway.
To thee all Nature's bountiful,
To thee the wood nymphs sing,
For there is naught more beautiful
Than bright and litesome Spring.

SCENE XIX.

Music.

Davus announces the wedding procession, and the party enter to the strains of a triumphal wedding march. The order of their entrance is as follows: First come eight Vestal Virgins bearing wreathes of flowers. Then follow eight youths bearing torches. After them come the bride and bridegroom, resplendent in their wedding costume. They are followed by Lucretius and Eunomia, and Caius Memmius and Catullus. The minstral is the last to enter, and remains upon the peristyle centre. After the party have grouped themselves on the fore-stage, the women on right, the men on left, Catullus comes down and says:

CATULLUS.

Welcome, welcome, welcome all, to Sirmio. Now let the wedding feast begin.

At the command of Catullus, the guests take their seats at the tables; the men at the table on the right, the women at the one on left. During the feast, the minstral stands upon the peristyle between the tables. The feast is served to music which quickly concludes. The minstral then motions to the youths to rise, and the women do the same at his command. Catullus then raises high his goblet and says:

CATULLUS.

As o'er the troubled sea the weary sailor views afar his cherished home, so we, through stormy seas have sailed and now behold our haven full in view. Two lovers, wed,—two families joined in honor and in peace, be-speak the mighty power of love that sways our lives and destinies. And now a health we'll drink to Julian and to Hermia.

ALL.

(Shout) Long life to Julian and Hermia.
(After all are again seated the minstral says:)

MINSTRAL.

The Epithalamium we'll sing if so it please my lord.

CATULLUS.

(Assents.)

(Then is sung the celebrated poem of Catullus.)

No. 12.

"HYMENEAL"

A YOUTH.

Vesper ascends: Ye youths together rise;
Eve's long expected star has gilt the skies:
Rise, leave the feast; the bride will soon appear;
The bridal song be sung: Oh Hymen, Hymen hear!

A VIRGIN.

Mark ye youths? to face them maidens rise;
Night shedding Hesper lights the spangled skies:
Look up; 'tis so; and saw ye how their throng
Sprang forth? nor idly; soon to raise the song.
Let us in rival strains surpass the lay:
O, Hymen, Hymen, bless the wedding-day.

A YOUTH.

Arduous the palm of strife: Oh, friends, be strong,
For see you maidens nurse some mutter'd song,
Nor idly nurse: Some memorable lay;
While we, our ears and thoughts have turned away.
We merit shame, since victory favours care.
Yet now your parts with emulation bear.
'Tis theirs to speak: Let us response's frame:
O, Hymen, Hymen, bless the marriage flame!

VIRGINS.

Hesper! knows heaven a star like thee severe,
That tear'st the maiden from her mother dear?
The lingering maiden from her mother's arms,
And yield'st some fervid youth her spotless charms;
What wrongs more fierce can cities storm'd display,
Come, Hymen hither! Hymen grace the day!

YOUTHS.

Hesper! what star more joyous shines above?
Thy flames confirm the plighted troth of love.
By covenants of men, of parents, sealed,
Thy dawn alone the wish'd embrace can yield.
What hour can gods bestow more wished than this:
Come, Hymen come, and crown the hour of bliss.

VIRGINS.

As in a fenc'd garden blows some flow'ret rare,
Safe from the nibbling flock or grinding shear,
Which gales refresh, sun strengthens, rain drops rear,
To many a youth and many a maiden dear.
Clipt by the nail it bends the stem and fades,
No more by youths admired, or wished by maids,
So loved the unpolluted virgin blooms,
But when the blighting touch her flower consumes,
No more she charms the youth, or charms the maid,
Come Hymen, Hymen, give the nuptial aid.

YOUTHS.

As on the naked field the lonely vine
Yields no sweet grape, now lifts its tendril twine,
Droops with its weight and winds its tender shoots,
With earthward bend around their twisted roots.
Nor herds nor peasants, in the noon day heat,
Beneath its chequer'd bowery shade retreat,
But, if it clasp some elm with married leaves,
Its shade the peasant and the herd receives,
Such is the virgin, who untouch'd remains
While still unwooed her useless beauty wanes;
But wedded in her bloom, those charms delight
Her husband's eyes, nor shame her parent's sight.

YOUTHS AND VIRGINS.

Resist not fiercely virgin;—but obey,
Thy mother, father, thy betrothers they:
Not thine the virgin flower; a part is theirs,
Thy sire a third, a third thy mother shares;
A third their own; then struggle not coy maid!
For in thy bridegroom both are disobeyed:
They with thy dower, have yielded every right,
Come, Hymen, Hymen, bless the marriage night.

At the conclusion of the Epithalamium, Hermia, and Julian come down stage, and the youths and maidens shower them with flowers. Then Hermia runs to her mother and throws her arms around her in a loving embrace. After this the bride and groom exit to chamber at right. The guests then pass out to music in the same manner they entered. When all have left the hall, the song of the Husbandmen is heard off scene. Catullus, who alone remains, looks admiringly at the group as they pass out; he finally falls listlessly into a seat upon the peristyle and looks out upon the lake. Then as the lights grow dim, showing by contrast the moonlit lake, the paean of love of Julian and Hermia is heard in the distance. As the music fades away, Catullus says:

CATULLUS.

Peace reigns at last where discontent and enmity ~~held~~ sway.

CURTAIN.

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